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IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Rep. Jeff Clemens Exposes What Is Missing In “Son of 6” Education Bill

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Florida House members today began two days of debate over a controversial teacher bill that Democratic Caucus members say is punitive to educators and, among other criticism, fails to improve teacher salaries.

Under House rules, Tuesday’s discussion was limited to a question-and-answer format. On Wednesday, more formal debate is scheduled.

Representative Jeff Clemens (D-Lake Worth) drew attention with his question.

He asked: **“Why was the decision made to draft a merit pay bill without any actual merit pay?”**

Several House Democratic Caucus members have dubbed the legislation “Son of 6” because of the bill’s extraordinary similarities to Senate Bill 6, which drew widespread criticism from teachers, parents and students statewide last year and was vetoed by then-Governor Charlie Crist.

House Democratic Caucus members sponsored four amendments to the bill, with the hopes of improving the legislation. The amendments were defeated.

- **Representative Martin Kiar (D-Parkland)** offered an amendment to align the bill with the federal Race to the Top standards in a memorandum of understanding sign by school districts.
- **Representative Dwight Bullard (D-Miami)** offered an amendment to give teachers a three-year contract, instead of an annual contract as prescribed by the bill.
- **Representative Gwyn Clarke-Reed (D-Deerfield Beach)** offered an amendment to help ensure that teachers determined to be “highly effective” and “effective” in their performance are not arbitrarily or capriciously discriminated against by administrators. Her amendment would require a

teacher's non-renewal to be based on performance and other legitimate reasons.

- **Representative Reggie Fullwood (D-Jacksonville)** offered an amendment to require principals who refuse to renew the annual contract of a high-performing teacher to state in writing the reason for the dismissal.

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